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# General Assembly

Official Records

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New York

*President:* Mr. Razali Ismail ..... (Malaysia)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

**Agenda item 23**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee**

**Report of the Secretary-General (A/51/360)**

**Draft resolution (A/51/L.13)**

**The President:** I call on the representative of the Philippines to introduce draft resolution A/51/L.13.

**Mr. Goco** (Philippines): As Chairman of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC), I have the honour and privilege to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee", contained in document A/51/L.13. The sponsors of the draft resolution are China, Cyprus, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Uganda and the Philippines. Since the issuance of the draft resolution, the following States have also become sponsors: Bhutan, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, Nigeria and Pakistan.

In the second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, the General Assembly states that it has considered the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/51/360, and notes with satisfaction the progress achieved towards enhancing cooperation between the United Nations system and the AALCC, particularly with regard to the programme of the United Nations Decade of International Law and programmes on environment and sustainable development.

It is pertinent to note that during the period under review, the secretariat of the AALCC organized, within the framework of the Consultative Committee at its thirty-fifth session, held in March 1996 in Manila, a special meeting on the proposed establishment of an international criminal court, which furnished a forum for an exchange of views on the draft statute prepared by the International Law Commission on that proposed international criminal court. I presided over that meeting. The following States are involved in the AALCC: Bahrain, Bangladesh, China, Cyprus, Arab Republic of Egypt, Gambia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, State of Palestine, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the State of Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Republic of Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates and Yemen Arab Republic. Botswana is an associate member; Australia and New Zealand have the status of permanent observers. With the exception of three or four, all these States participated in the meeting in March 1996.

A report on the proceedings of the special meeting was thereafter transmitted to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee on the Establishment of an

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International Criminal Court. The AALCC was represented at the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Committee, and the AALCC secretariat will report thereon at the thirty-sixth session of the Consultative Committee, to be held at Tehran in 1997.

It may be recalled that a proposal for a periodic meeting of the legal advisers of the Member States to facilitate an informal exchange of views on contemporary problems and issues was first initiated and approved at the fifteenth session of the AALCC held in 1974 in Tokyo. Since then a number of meetings have been convened and have considered, *inter alia*, issues such as the organization of legal advisory services in member Governments, the jurisdictional immunities of States, the improvement of modalities of work before the Sixth Committee, promoting the wider use of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the implementation of multilateral conventions adopted under the auspices of the United Nations, the role of the ICJ in the peaceful settlement of environmental disputes, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights, and joint ventures in and exploitation of seabed resources.

Representatives of as many as 42 States Members of the United Nations participated in a meeting of the legal advisers, convened by the AALCC at United Nations Headquarters here in New York on 9 October 1995. The President of the General Assembly was present, as was a Judge of the International Court of Justice, the Legal Counsel of the United Nations and the Secretary-General of the AALCC. They all addressed that meeting, over which I also presided.

On 14 November 1996, the AALCC will commemorate the fortieth anniversary of its constitution. The secretariat of the AALCC has now served the African and Asian States for 40 years, and will endeavour to continue to do so in the years ahead. To commemorate the fortieth anniversary, the secretariat will publish a special volume of essays on international law, with contributions from distinguished jurists, Government officials and representatives of international organizations. The proposed volume is now in press and we plan to release it on the constitution day of the AALCC on 14 November 1996.

In paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-third session a report on cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC. It is therefore crucial for the General Assembly to adopt the draft resolution contained in document A/51/L.13 by consensus.

**Mr. de Silva** (Sri Lanka): Sri Lanka is privileged to have been associated with the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC) since its inception. The AALCC has played an invaluable and historic role since the 1950s in creating a wider appreciation of international legal issues among the newly independent States of Asia and Africa, which were then emerging from long periods of colonial rule. It helped in the formulation and progressive development of the existing norms and principles of international law so as to take into account the political and economic needs and aspirations of the developing countries of Asia and Africa.

Over the years the Committee has made a unique contribution to the initiatives of the United Nations in the codification and progressive development of international law. The impact that the Committee made during the negotiations at the Third United Nations Conference of the Law of the Sea is a matter of record. Its contribution to the evolution of the concept of the exclusive economic zone in particular stands testimony to the invaluable role of the Committee in the creation of the new legal regime of the oceans. The Committee was also closely associated with the work of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and was actively engaged in the formulation of the legal instruments that emerged from this initiative, particularly the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General of the AALCC for his statement to the General Assembly, which outlined the steps taken by the Committee to ensure continuing and close cooperation between the two organizations. We also welcome the report of the Secretary-General, which underlines the need to enhance such cooperation. These clearly reflect the fact that the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee is continuing its efforts towards strengthening the role of the United Nations and its organs, particularly the International Law Commission and the International Court of Justice.

The programmes and initiatives recently undertaken by the AALCC deal with a range of issues that are both complex and of current relevance to Member States. At the recent Manila session of the Committee, a special meeting was devoted to the discussion of the draft statute of the proposed international criminal court. The

importance and complexity of the issues involved in this initiative require the widest possible participation of the countries of Asia and Africa in the preparatory work. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the International Court of Justice, a seminar was convened in New Delhi with a view to promoting the wider use of the Court in the peaceful settlement of disputes. The AALCC is currently engaged in organizing, in association with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a workshop on refugee law which would deal with issues relating to the status and treatment of refugees and the question of internally displaced persons. Through such a work programme, focusing on legal issues of current relevance, the Committee strives to ensure that there is an Asian-African dimension in current international negotiations.

The Committee thus has a continuing and crucial role to play in these ongoing initiatives of the United Nations. As contemporary international law is called upon to meet new challenges in a post-cold-war era, the Committee must ensure that the interests of the Asian and African countries are duly reflected in the formulation of new legal norms and principles. This requires close and effective cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC.

Sri Lanka therefore welcomes all efforts to enhance the cooperation that exists between the United Nations and the AALCC. We are pleased to co-sponsor draft resolution A/51/L.13 and commend its adoption by consensus.

**Mr. Chen Shiqiu** (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Since its establishment 40 years ago, the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC) has become a significant and unique organization of an intergovernmental and regional nature in the international arena, while the number of its full member States has increased from 7 to the present 43. It not only serves as a forum where Asian and African countries undertake discussions, consultations and cooperation on legal issues and other questions of common concern, but also makes important contributions to the promotion of the progressive development and codification of international law, so that it better serves world peace and development.

The AALCC became an observer at the General Assembly in 1980. Since then, the two organizations have enjoyed ever closer cooperation. The Secretary-General's representative participates in the annual meeting of the AALCC every year, while the AALCC sends delegates to take part in a variety of meetings in the United Nations system, among them sessions of the General Assembly, the Sixth Committee, the International Law Commission (ILC), and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). In this way, the AALCC is actively participating in the examination of various matters within its area of concern and making positive contributions to them. The AALCC has made efforts to adjust its programme of work, to give priority consideration to matters of current concern at the United Nations, and it has taken initiatives to carry out activities with a view to enhancing the role of the United Nations.

It is particularly worth mentioning that the AALCC attaches special importance to cooperation with the ILC. Besides inviting the ILC Chairman to participate and introduce the Commission's work to its annual meeting every year, the AALCC makes the report of each session of the ILC a fixed agenda item under which a discussion is held and suggestions are made. Conversely, the Secretary-General of the AALCC attends each session of the ILC and introduces the work of the AALCC. We deem this cooperation fruitful and satisfactory.

The AALCC has been active in its efforts to promote a more extensive utilization of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and has produced a study in this regard. In January this year, it held a symposium in New Delhi on the topic of the operation and function of the ICJ, to commemorate the Court's fiftieth anniversary and to encourage members to strengthen its role.

The General Assembly, by its resolution 44/23, proclaimed 1990-1999 as the United Nations Decade of International Law. Responding favourably to this, the AALCC secretariat has prepared a document outlining a number of projects and pragmatic activities to be carried out during the Decade. The AALCC and the Government of Qatar co-sponsored the Qatar conference on international law, as a positive contribution to encourage wider appreciation of the principles of international law in countries of the Asian and African regions, and to promote the progressive development of international law.

The AALCC continues to follow closely the implementation of the various international instruments emanating from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), especially the implementation of Agenda 21. It has taken part in many negotiations in the field of environment and development under the auspices of the United Nations and has studied carefully the relevant draft conventions, thus providing useful help to its members in various negotiations.

Recently, during its thirty-fifth annual session in March 1996, the AALCC organized a special meeting on the establishment of an international criminal court. The occasion provided a useful opportunity both for an exhaustive discussion on important questions relating to the establishment of the court and for furthering mutual understanding and cooperation on the matter among the member States.

In view of the above, it is satisfying for us to see the strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC. We hope that the effective cooperation between the two organizations in the field of the gradual development and codification of international law and in other areas of common concern can be further enhanced so that a positive contribution can be made to the promotion of friendly cooperation among countries, the maintenance of world peace and security, common prosperity for all societies, and the achievement of a just and sound new international order based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence and the spirit of the Bandung Conference.

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to the work of the AALCC. Since becoming a full member in 1983, China has actively participated in all the annual sessions of the organization, and successfully hosted the twenty-ninth session in 1990. The Chinese Government will continue, as always, to give its full support to the work of the AALCC, and will do its share in furthering its role and influence and encouraging its closer cooperation with the United Nations.

**Mr. Suamin** (Indonesia): Allow me to begin by expressing our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the report entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee", which is contained in document A/51/360. It provides an informative account of the activities of the Committee in the recent past.

It is fitting to recall that the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC) was a tangible outcome of the historic Bandung Conference that gave impetus to the legitimate aspiration and demand of the Asian and African peoples for the development of a more just and democratic international legal order. It was self-evident that if the law was to command respect of all nations, it had to take into account the views of developing countries, irrespective of differences in political, legal or social systems, and based on respect for sovereignty, integrity and non-interference. Indonesia, as one of the five founding members of the AALCC, takes great pride in the accomplishments of the Committee, especially its endeavours to promote acceptance and respect for the principles of international law.

During the course of the work of the AALCC, it has oriented its activities to complement the work of the United Nations, with a view to strengthening the role of the Organization. In this context, it has established close relations with the Organization and its various agencies engaged in the field of law and in economic and humanitarian matters. This culminated in the decision of the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session to accord observer status to the Consultative Committee, a distinction shared by few international organizations.

Following a series of consultations between United Nations and AALCC officials, a programme of cooperation has been established which identified the following specific areas: cooperative framework; representation at meetings and conferences; strengthening the role of the United Nations and the United Nations Decade of International Law; promoting wider use of the International Court of Justice; measures for the promotion of ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; international economic cooperation for development; other issues before the AALCC; and the fortieth anniversary of the AALCC.

We are gratified to note the degree and extent of cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC secretariat. Apart from the promotion of codification, the efforts of the AALCC have been devoted to the ratification process of United Nations conventions and treaties. In this regard, it has worked tirelessly to disseminate information and foster wider appreciation of international law among its member States. During the period under review, the AALCC was represented at many meetings and conferences, including among others the United Nations Congress on Public International Law, the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, the second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Expert Group Workshop on International Environmental Law Aiming at Sustainable Development, and the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.

My delegation is of the view that the role of the AALCC should be further strengthened in the programme of the United Nations Decade of International Law. We

believe that the Decade provides a unique opportunity to enhance cooperation between the two organizations, particularly in the holding of seminars, workshops and scholarship programmes in conjunction with other specialized agencies, for the benefit of developing countries. We are also pleased to note that the AALCC organized a forum for an exchange of views on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court. The results of those deliberations proved useful to the sessions of the Preparatory Committee. My delegation is further gratified by the proposal to issue a special publication in commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the AALCC.

As regards the promotion of the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Indonesia has consistently supported AALCC activities in this vital field. It was at the instance of Indonesia that in 1970 the AALCC rendered assistance to Asian and African States in the preparatory work for the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. We are pleased to note that the work of the Consultative Committee now includes promoting the effective participation of member States in the International Seabed Authority. In this context, its efforts are exerted towards the adoption of common policy and strategy for the interim period before the commercial exploitation of deep seabed mining becomes feasible.

In an era where trade barriers are down, the issue of international economic cooperation for economic development should be accorded primary importance. The identification of an international legal framework to promote such cooperation is indeed valuable. In this regard, the contribution of the AALCC in promoting the legal texts of United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) has assisted member States in harmonizing rules of international trade law.

In addition, the close relations established between the two organizations have resulted in fruitful collaboration on many questions. In fostering the institution of arbitration, it adopted the integrated scheme for settlement of disputes, which has led to the establishment of regional arbitration centres in Cairo, Kuala Lumpur and Lagos. It was believed that trade and development in Asia and Africa would be enhanced with the creation of a climate of stability and confidence in economic transactions. Furthermore, the holding of the Conference on the Settlement of Energy, Petroleum and Gas Disputes by the AALCC Regional Centre for International Commercial Arbitration in Cairo in November 1994, in joint sponsorship with the World Bank, was yet another worthy endeavour in this field.

The consideration of the question of refugees is indeed timely when flashpoints of unrest persist throughout the world. It is in this context that my delegation is encouraged by the initiatives of the AALCC in the study of refugee law and its problems. By closely working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, it has held various seminars to raise the consciousness of the international community on the pertinent issues of legislation governing the treatment of refugees. Furthermore, it has recently drafted legislation on the rights and duties of refugees within the context of international law and State practices.

It is undeniable that the AALCC has played a significant role in harmonizing the views of the countries in the Asian-African region on the codification and development of international law. It has succeeded in formulating a common approach to some complex international legal issues. In an era of global interdependence, new vistas have opened up for the global community to work together in close cooperation as we strive for peace, justice and development. We remain confident that the AALCC will continue its service to its member States to realize those goals.

In conclusion, my delegation deems it a distinct pleasure to be among the sponsors of the draft resolution (A/51/L.13) before us, entitled, "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee".

**Mr. Hayes** (Ireland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The following associated countries align themselves with this statement: Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

This occasion affords me the opportunity to acknowledge a process of cooperation which has grown from relatively modest beginnings in 1980 and has matured into the fruitful relationship we witness today. In so doing, I would like to begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his report, contained in document A/51/360, which faithfully records the landmarks in the history of the cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC). In 1981, to commemorate the Consultative Committee's twenty-fifth anniversary, the General Assembly requested the United Nations Secretary-General to hold

consultations with the Secretary-General of the Consultative Committee, with a view to further strengthening and widening the scope of cooperation between the two organizations. Fifteen years later, the Secretary-General's report is proof that the terms of the General Assembly's request have indeed been met.

In trying to select a particular aspect of the cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, the European Union is faced with a veritable *embarras de richesses*, as indeed was apparent from the statement of the Chairman of the Consultative Committee here this morning. Nevertheless, I feel that it is appropriate on this occasion to acknowledge the common interest of the Union and the Consultative Committee in the work of the United Nations Decade of International Law. The Union has followed with interest the Consultative Committee's efforts towards promoting wider use of the International Court of Justice, as well as its active participation in the ongoing debate on the establishment of an international criminal court. The European Union is grateful to the Consultative Committee for the measures it has taken towards the promotion of the ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The European Union would like to lay stress on the Consultative Committee's important work in the area of international economic cooperation for development. In this regard, the Union notes that at its thirty-fourth session, the Consultative Committee urged its member States to take account of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Model Law on Procurement of Goods, Construction and Services when reforming or enacting their legislation on procurement. The Consultative Committee also urged its member States to consider adopting or acceding to other proposals prepared by UNCITRAL. The European Union has also taken cognizance of the Consultative Committee's scheme for the settlement of disputes in economic and commercial transactions. In particular, the Union is pleased to note that regional arbitration centres have been established in Cairo, Kuala Lumpur and Lagos to assist in the promotion and implementation of UNCITRAL arbitration rules. The Union also notes with satisfaction that it is planned to establish a similar centre in Nairobi to serve eastern and southern Africa.

Finally, the European Union recalls with pleasure that, on the occasion of the historic fiftieth session of the General Assembly, 42 legal advisers from United Nations Member States participated in a meeting convened by the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee at the Headquarters of the United Nations. In so recalling, the European Union wishes in a sense to return the compliment by extending its best wishes to the Consultative Committee on the occasion of its fortieth anniversary. The Consultative Committee is marking this milestone by organizing a seminar and by publishing a collection of essays in the field of international law.

The European Union is of the view that these commemorative events are appropriately in keeping with the objectives of the United Nations Decade of International Law and with the proud tradition of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee.

**Mr. Fathalla** (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): We are pleased to participate in the discussion on agenda item 23, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee", particularly as the Consultative Committee is commemorating its fortieth anniversary. The AALCC has proven the importance of its work not only in coordinating the positions of its membership in Asia and Africa but also in engaging in studies and research, by which the Committee has contributed to the development of international law and in support of the role of the United Nations.

I think we should commend the Committee's capacity to adapt and to develop its work over the years to meet the needs of the international community and to keep pace with the present developments in the United Nations. Cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC is therefore extremely important.

The Secretary-General's report, contained in document A/51/360 of 16 September 1996, describes various forms of cooperation in different fields, covering joint consultation on issues of common interest and importance, the exchange of documents and information, and the determination of issues where the Committee can support the role of the international Organization. As a result, the AALCC has oriented its programme of work to give permanent priority to issues of interest to the United Nations. Among these issues is support for the role of the United Nations — and the Committee has indeed made a considerable contribution in this field, exemplified in its study entitled "Strengthening the role of the United Nations through rationalization of its functional modalities with special reference to the General Assembly" (A/40/726 and Corr.1, annex). That study contains a general evaluation of the performance of the United

Nations. We believe it has enriched the present discussion on the issue, which is one of the most pressing issues for the Organization.

The AALCC continues to adapt speedily in order to continue to support the United Nations. A recent example of this is described in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report (A/51/360): the AALCC's holding of a special meeting in March 1996 on the establishment of an international criminal court. This was an important forum to exchange views informally on the work of the Preparatory Committee on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court. We believe that this is one of the most important issues before the United Nations today.

It is expected that the diplomatic conference for the establishment of the court will be held in mid-1998. In this connection, we feel that the meeting of the Consultative Committee to be held in Tehran in 1997 is important, for it will provide a further opportunity to coordinate positions and to follow up on the present negotiations in the Preparatory Committee. This would enable the AALCC to continue to provide the necessary support to the United Nations prior to the holding of the diplomatic conference to consider the statute of the court.

My delegation does not wish to enumerate here the advantages of supporting cooperation between the Committee and the United Nations, or to set out the various fields of cooperation; the report of the Secretary-General contains all these details. However, I shall note that in recent years there has been cooperation on international economic issues related to development, refugees and other important issues that are before the Organization.

I commend the role played by the regional arbitration centres, established by the AALCC in order to assist in strengthening the rules of arbitration established by United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, which is one of the important bodies of the United Nations. Egypt welcomes the steps now being taken by the AALCC to establish an arbitration centre in Nairobi to serve eastern and southern African countries. We hope this will very soon be the fourth centre, in addition to those operating in Cairo, Kuala Lumpur and Lagos.

I wish finally to say that Egypt will continue to support the AALCC, to promote continued cooperation between the AALCC and the United Nations, and to provide all necessary assistance to attain this objective.

**Mr. Danesh-Yazdi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Allow me to begin by expressing the appreciation of my delegation to the Secretary-General for his report on "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee", contained in document A/51/360.

Upholding justice and respect for the principles of international law are among the essential elements of a peaceful world as envisaged by the founders of the United Nations. In order to realize these lofty objectives, the Charter of the United Nations assigned the General Assembly a special role in the promotion of international cooperation and the encouragement of the progressive development and codification of international law. As a result, over the past 51 years, dozens of conventions and other international instruments regulating various aspects of relations among States have been developed under the auspices of the United Nations.

We in Asia and Africa — eager to play an active role in bringing the rule of law into inter-State relations and to participate in the process of the codification of international law and its progressive development — established the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee 40 years ago. This is an organization that is unique in those two regions. Since its inception, the AALCC has undertaken a number of studies in the field of international legal matters of common interest to the two continents. Moreover, it has functioned as an important forum for the exchange of views and information among its member States. It has played a significant role in exploring and harmonizing the needs, views and positions of African and Asian countries concerning various aspects of lawmaking at the international level.

A common objective, namely striving for the progressive development of international law and its codification, links the two organizations. It was this common aim that led to commencement of cooperation between the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee and the United Nations immediately after the foundation of the AALCC in 1956, a cooperation that continues to this day and that has proven to be fruitful and constructive.

For instance, the AALCC has undertaken a systematic and consistent examination from Asian and African perspectives of items on the agendas of the Sixth Committee and the International Law Commission. Its views and recommendations have proven useful to the

members of the Consultative Committee and, directly or indirectly, have been reflected in the proceedings of the lawmaking organs of the United Nations.

Cooperation between the AALCC and the United Nations has been consolidated and has found new dimensions in recent years. The Consultative Committee has included in its programme of projects and studies a number of important items that are on the agenda of the General Assembly, including those of the law of the sea, international protection of refugees, international economic cooperation, and illicit traffic in narcotic drugs.

Moreover, the Secretary-General of the Consultative Committee or his representatives have participated in and addressed meetings of the Sixth Committee and other subsidiary bodies at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at United Nations offices in Europe. Representatives from the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs have likewise participated in and addressed the annual meetings of the AALCC.

Significantly, cooperation between the two organizations is not limited to the lawmaking process alone and covers other fields as well. For instance, the Consultative Committee has undertaken studies to facilitate the ratification process of conventions, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and has taken initiatives to help the dissemination and wider appreciation of international law among its members. To this end, it has organized seminars and workshops in cooperation with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law and other lawmaking bodies.

Through the adoption of General Assembly resolution 44/23, another avenue for cooperation between the two organizations has been opened, with the proclamation of the period 1990-1999 as the United Nations Decade of International Law.

*Mr. Agathocleous (Cyprus), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

In this context, the Consultative Committee has regularly submitted its views on the program of activities for the Decade, and recently presented a report on the role it can play in this field, currently under consideration by the working group concerned. It has also carried out specific studies devoted to enhancing the role of the International Court of Justice, which is one of the objectives of the Decade of International Law. Last but not the least, the Consultative Committee participated actively in the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the United Nations and, in 1996, organized a regional seminar to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the International Court of Justice.

The report before the General Assembly illustrates in detail the very constructive cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC over the last two years. We feel that prospects for future cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee are bright. This is why the Islamic Republic of Iran, as host country to the next annual session of the Consultative Committee, has joined in sponsoring the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, contained in document A/51/L.13, and expresses its hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

**Mr. Mahugu** (Kenya): The role played by the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC) since its inception as a forum for consultation and cooperation between its members and as a channel for the exchange of information and experience with other regions has been most useful and productive. It is in recognition of this important role that 15 years ago the General Assembly, in its resolution 36/38 of 18 November 1981 requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to carry out consultations with the Secretary-General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee with a view to strengthening further and widening the scope of cooperation between the two organizations in certain areas of common concern.

By 1984, the AALCC had won the full confidence of the General Assembly, which adopted a resolution commending AALCC for orienting its programmes to strengthen its supportive role to the work of the United Nations in wider areas, and in 1987 drew up a further programme of cooperation, which identified several specific areas for cooperation between the two secretariats.

Kenya has had a long and productive association with the AALCC, and it is therefore with pleasure that I address the Assembly on behalf of the Kenya delegation to express our warm thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General and secretariat of the AALCC for their outstanding work in promoting interregional and international cooperation, supportive of the efforts of the United Nations, with a view to strengthening the role of the United Nations in the progressive development and

codification of international law as well as in economic and humanitarian matters.

As a developing country, Kenya highly values the many studies, workshops and seminars organized by the AALCC in areas of concern to African and Asian countries. The secretariat has maintained a high profile representation at United Nations-sponsored conferences, notably at negotiations for conventions emanating from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, and the law of the sea, to mention but a few. In that regard, my delegation looks forward to the contribution of the AALCC at the special session of the General Assembly to be convened for the purpose of an overall review of the implementation of Agenda 21.

It is particularly gratifying to note that AALCC members, determined to play a meaningful role in the ongoing work of the General Assembly, took the opportunity presented by the Manila session of the AALCC this year to focus attention on the question of the creation of an international criminal court. As an in-house forum for reviewing and exchanging views on the progress made so far on the draft statute of the international criminal court, the meeting proved very productive; it is our hope that given the complexity of issues involved, the AALCC will participate even more actively in future work.

We wish finally to appeal to States members of the AALCC to pay their outstanding contributions in full and on time in order that the organization may continue to serve its member States in their various fields of endeavour in collaboration with the United Nations.

**Mr. Dev** (India): India has had the privilege of hosting the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC) in New Delhi since its inception. This underscores the importance we attach to the Committee and its work.

My delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/51/360. The report deals in detail with the activities of cooperation undertaken between the United Nations and the Committee over the last year. My delegation underscores with particular interest and appreciation the activities of the AALCC in the economic, environmental and humanitarian areas of international law. The AALCC has been represented at several meetings and conferences of the United Nations relating to international law. Specific mention may be made in this connection of the participation of the AALCC in the historic United Nations Congress on Public International Law held in the General Assembly Hall.

The annual session of the AALCC, held at Manila in March 1996, was a significant event. It was attended at high level by representatives of member States and of interested observer States. Particularly noteworthy were the deliberations on the subject of the establishment of an international criminal court. Discussions on other important subjects, such as international trade law, refugees, the law of the sea, and environmental law were equally valuable and useful, especially for clarifications of the legal issues involved from the perspective of Asian and African countries.

We are also happy to note that under the able leadership of its Secretary-General, Mr. Tang Chengyuan, the Committee is undertaking rationalization of its work programme and priorities. To meet growing demand due to the increasing importance of international law in diverse areas of international life, the Committee is organizing programmes of legal cooperation between the AALCC and other international law bodies in the United Nations system and outside it.

The training programmes that the Committee is contemplating for the benefit of its member States will also no doubt prove useful. United Nations assistance in the implementation of such programmes would increase the content of cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC.

Above all, the efforts of the Committee to modernize its functional apparatus within its limited budget are praiseworthy. We have no doubt that the Committee will continue to grow from strength to strength in the years to come. India extends its full cooperation towards that goal.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to emphasize that existing cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC could be deepened and enhanced in a functional manner so as to further benefit its membership by ensuring better understanding of international law, and by adapting it and contributing to its development. We are also glad to be among the sponsors of the draft resolution on this item, and recommend its adoption.

**The Acting President**: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/2 of 13 October 1980, I now call on the observer for the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee.

**Mr. Bhagwat-Singh** (Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee): On behalf of the Secretary-General of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee (AALCC), His Excellency Mr. Tang Chengyuan, I wish to thank the General Assembly for its consideration of the draft resolution contained in document A/51/L.13. It shows the confidence of members in the efforts of AALCC in its work and cooperation with the United Nations. We would also like to express our appreciation to the sponsors of the draft resolution and other delegations for their support and comments on the work of our Organization as expressed in earlier statements. The report of the Secretary-General (A/51/360) describes some of the areas of cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC. We would like to commend the Secretary-General, the Legal Counsel of the United Nations and members of the Secretariat for the preparation of a fairly comprehensive report on the various activities and programmes of the AALCC towards strengthening the role of the United Nations and its various organs.

Every other year, the General Assembly takes up the item of cooperation between the United Nations and the AALCC. This gives us an opportunity to discuss some of the substantive areas within our area of competence.

The AALCC was constituted in November 1956, and in the years since it was granted permanent observer status in 1980 its work in support of the United nations has predominantly aimed at rendering assistance to AALCC member States in their consideration of the agenda items before the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly. It has also assisted in economic and humanitarian fields through the preparation of briefs and studies by its secretariat. This has required the inclusion of certain items and topics under consideration by the United Nations in the work programme of the AALCC.

Another significant aspect of the AALCC's work has been the efforts towards the promotion of the ratification and implementation of major international instruments and such initiatives as wider use of the International Court of Justice for the peaceful settlement of disputes. At each of its successive sessions, the AALCC has urged its member States to ratify or accede to key multilateral conventions such as those on the law of the sea, the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The AALCC which began with a membership of 7 States today has 44 members and 2 observers. From a small beginning, emerging from the historic Bandung Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, the AALCC has gradually established itself as a major forum for international cooperation. Its work programme has also been oriented to meet challenges posed by contemporary international society and the needs of an expanding membership of our two organizations.

During the 1960s, the AALCC was among the first regional organizations to study the matter of the legality of nuclear weapons. During the 1970s when the law of the sea and the question of a new international economic order were in the forefront, the AALCC made its contribution by being instrumental in evolving the concept of archipelagic States and exclusive economic zones.

This year also marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Principles Concerning Treatment of Refugees adopted by the AALCC at its eighth session. The Bangkok Principles, as they are popularly referred to, were the first set of norms and principles to be adopted by a regional organization with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It is proposed to review the Bangkok Principles later this year in the light of the experience acquired during the last 30 years. A special seminar to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Bangkok Principles is to be convened at Manila in December for this purpose.

Earlier in the course of the present decade, when the General Assembly decided to convene a conference on environment and development, the AALCC secretariat involved itself, as extensively as its resources permitted, with the preparatory phase of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

The involvement of the AALCC with the United Nations Decade of International Law has been particularly significant. The secretariat of the AALCC has recently been involved in the United Nations Environment Programme initiative on international environmental law aiming at sustainable development and the study on the need for and the feasibility of new international environmental instruments aimed at sustainable development. A meeting of legal advisers of States members of the AALCC was held at United Nations Headquarters on 9 October 1996. Among other things, it considered the issue of the AALCC's contribution to the special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be held in June 1997.

In the years since its establishment, the AALCC has made its modest contribution to the objectives and goals relevant to its sphere of competence. In the process, it has established a relationship with a number of organs and agencies of the United Nations. The Committee will continue to work to support the work and activities of United Nations bodies and to cooperate to ensure that the rule of law prevails in international relations. The new international legal order must affirm such principles and norms of inter-State relations as the sovereign equality of States; non-interference in the internal affairs of other States; the non-use of force; the peaceful settlement of disputes; respect for human rights; the right to development; the protection and preservation of the environment; and the principle of the common heritage of mankind.

This year the AALCC will commemorate the fortieth anniversary of its establishment and, among other things, will be publishing a collection of essays on international law contributed by eminent scholars, lawyers and officials of member States and of United Nations bodies.

I also wish to inform the General Assembly that the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/51/360 will be distributed to the participants of the thirty-sixth session of the AALCC, to be held at Tehran in May 1997 at the invitation of the Government of Iran. I take this opportunity to extend an invitation to all States Members of the United Nations and observers to participate in this annual session of the AALCC.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/51/L.13.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/51/L.13?

*Draft resolution A/51/L.13 was adopted* (resolution 51/11).

**The Acting President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 23?

*It was so decided.*

**Reports of the Fifth Committee**

**The Acting President:** The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 120, 129, 140 (a), 134 and 157.

If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before it today.

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that:

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

**Agenda item 120**

**Human resources management**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/643)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/51/643).

The draft decision, entitled "Employment of retirees", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes also to adopt the draft decision?

*The draft decision was adopted.*

**The Acting President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 120.

**Agenda item 129**

**Financing of the United Nations Protection Force, the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force and the United Nations Peace Forces headquarters**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/639)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/51/639).

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 51/12).

**The Acting President:** We have concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 129.

**Agenda items 129** ***(continued)*** **and 140**

**Financing of the United Nations Protection Force, the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force and the United Nations Peace Forces headquarters**

**Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations**

**(a) Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/640)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/51/640).

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 51/13).

**The Acting President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 129 and sub-item (a) of agenda item 140.

**Agenda item 134**

**Financing of the United Nations Mission in Haiti**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/637)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/51/637).

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 51/14).

**The Acting President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 134.

**Agenda item 157**

**Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti**

**Report of the Fifth Committee (A/51/638)**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report (A/51/638).

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly also wishes to adopt it?

*The draft resolution was adopted* (resolution 51/15).

**The Acting President:** We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 157.

**Agenda item 44**

**Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s**

**Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Mid-term Review**

**of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (A/51/48)**

**Report of the Secretary-General (A/51/228 and Add.1)**

**Draft resolution (A/51/48, sect. IV)**

**The Acting President:** I should like to inform the Assembly that, in a letter dated 31 October 1996 addressed to the President of the General Assembly, the Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the group of Western European and other States for the month of October, requests that the General Assembly hear in plenary meeting a statement by the observer of the Holy See during the debate on agenda item 44, "Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s".

Members will recall that in accordance with established practice of the General Assembly, observer non-Member States may normally make statements only in the Main Committees. However, following consultations and taking into account the importance attached to the issue under discussion, it is proposed that the General Assembly should take a decision on that request.

May I take it that there is no objection to the proposal to hear the observer of the Holy See in the course of the debate on agenda item 44, "Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s"?

*It was so decided.*

**The Acting President:** I call now on the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, Mr. Hisashi Owada of Japan, to introduce the report of the Ad Hoc Committee and the draft resolution contained in section IV of that report.

**Mr. Owada** (Japan): It is my honour as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s to present to the General Assembly the report of the Committee as contained in document A/51/48.

The session of the Ad Hoc Committee was held at United Nations Headquarters from 16 to 20 September 1996 and was attended by a large number of Member States, entities of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The documentation for the mid-term review, as well as statements made at the opening meeting and during the general debate, have greatly contributed to facilitating the deliberations and achieving encouraging results.

The mid-term review represented an invaluable opportunity to demonstrate the validity of the emerging consensus for a new and innovative approach to the development of Africa. While the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), which was adopted by the General Assembly by resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991, represented a global compact between African countries on the one hand and the international community on the other, the conclusions and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee submitted for adoption at this session constitute a set of common and complementary objectives and targets to be implemented in an integrated manner and in a spirit of full partnership.

It should be noted that during its organizational session held on 20 June 1996, the Ad Hoc Committee had decided that the mid-term review would be conducted in two Working Groups to review the two main parts of the UN-NADAF, relating to Africa's responsibility and commitment and the responsibility and commitment of the international community. Both Working Groups, under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Insanally of Guyana and Ambassador Reyn of Belgium respectively, wisely avoided apportioning blame either to the African States or to the non-African partners. Instead, as can be seen in the conclusions that form the annex to the draft resolution submitted to the Assembly, the Working Groups identified selected areas in which to carry out a fair and impartial assessment of achievements over the past five years, and produced concrete and realistic recommendations to be implemented through cooperation and partnership among all the parties concerned.

It is heartening to note that, avoiding a pitfall encountered in the past, African countries and their development partners successfully concluded their discussion and analysis of the performance of all the parties involved, even in such controversial areas as political and economic reform, promotion of the private sector, human development, regional and subregional cooperation and integration, resource flows, external debt,

trade, economic diversification and capacity-building. Thus, in spite of persisting differences with respect to these issues, such an approach led all parties to identify areas where additional efforts are required, and to recommend measures that are as practical and as specific as possible.

It should also be noted that the mid-term review of UN-NADAF took into account the developments that have taken place in the field of international cooperation. Prominent among them are the series of United Nations conferences and summits that have been held since the adoption of UN-NADAF. The outcomes of these global gatherings have helped, through the assessment and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee, to further the interdependence of such critical elements as social development, economic development, environmental protection and human rights.

Another point that was repeatedly referred to by the Ad Hoc Committee was the relevance of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. It should be noted that there was a broad consensus that the Special Initiative should be seen as an operational arm of UN-NADAF and that it should help in mobilizing resources for the implementation of the New Agenda.

The Ad Hoc Committee also reviewed the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation machinery of UN-NADAF at the global, regional, subregional and country levels. In this regard, two aspects were highlighted: the need to enhance coordination among the relevant bodies of the United Nations system, including harmonization of the activities of UN-NADAF; and the Special Initiative on Africa.

Follow-up and monitoring should also take into account recent initiatives such as the proposal made at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development ministerial meeting of May 1996 for a new global development strategy, which was subsequently endorsed in the Economic Declaration of the Group of Seven summit in Lyon in June 1996. Another important follow-up activity identified by the Ad Hoc Committee is a second Tokyo International Conference on African Development, to be held in 1998, at which, *inter alia*, implementation of the outcome of the mid-term review of UN-NADAF is expected to be reviewed.

As indicated earlier, the assessment and recommendations with respect to the efforts of African countries in the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), the support of their development partners, and the follow-up and monitoring machinery have been undertaken in the spirit of full partnership and shared responsibility. In other words, they reflect the conviction of the international community that the development of Africa is one of its major challenges in this post-cold-war era, and that an economic take-off in that region would not only improve the standard of living of its people, but would also have a positive impact on the world economy as a whole.

The General Assembly and all its individual components within and outside Africa should not only endorse the conclusions that have just been outlined but, more important, create the conditions for their speedy and successful implementation. Indeed, their common determination, demonstrated during the mid-term review, to go beyond the traditional division between donors and recipients, or North and South, should be seen as an enabling factor for creating such conditions.

Having thus far given an assessment of the UN-NADAF mid-term review work in my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, I wish to offer a few points by way of comments on this UN-NADAF mid-term review exercise in my capacity as Permanent Representative of Japan. The first and the foremost point I wish to make is that, as many other colleagues of mine have repeatedly stated in the past, the problem of development in Africa is at a major crossroads. In the new international environment created by the end of the cold war, an environment in which the interdependence of the nations of the world, the globalization of the world economy, and the incidence of military conflict within national boundaries are all increasing, the development of Africa is one of the most pressing issues facing the international community, and it will continue to be of enormous significance well into the next century.

Economic and social development is not only important in and of itself. It is also a key to resolving the recurrent tragedy of armed confrontation and all the problems that flow from it. If only for that reason, we must keep our eyes on the problems impeding development when we address security and political questions in Africa. Also, economic take-off by a significant number of African countries through development would not only enhance the economic well-being of the peoples of Africa, but would also benefit the rest of the world enormously by promoting the full integration of African economies into the international economic system.

In clear recognition of this, in 1993, as the world began to reorder itself in the aftermath of the cold war, Japan, as host country for the G-7 economic summit in Tokyo, took the initiative in introducing the idea of a new development strategy. That concept came to be reflected in the economic declaration issued at the conclusion of the Tokyo summit meeting. Although at the time it existed only in the most rudimentary form, the strategy became the basis for the Tokyo International Conference on African Development that Japan organized in Tokyo later that year.

Since that time, Japan has been unwavering in its commitment to the international effort to promote the development of Africa. Thus, my Government hosted a series of meetings and seminars on this subject that proved most productive. On the strength of this experience, Japan is now planning to host a Second Tokyo Conference, this time at the summit level, in 1998. I should like to take this occasion to make it clear that it is the intention of my Government to link the cycle of Tokyo Conferences, which includes preparatory meetings and conferences, with efforts to implement UN-NADAF, so that they can complement and reinforce each other.

The best way to establish such a linkage is to identify common targets based on a new partnership of all parties involved in the development process. It is also important to set the ways and means to achieve this by utilizing not only official development assistance but also private investment, trade, social infrastructure building, human capacity development, and all other elements which are essential to achieving those targets, as well as by devising an ideal policy mix to suit the concrete socio-economic conditions of the countries involved. It is precisely this comprehensive and individualized approach that Japan has been refining and promoting as the ingredients of the new development strategy.

To start the process of implementing UN-NADAF through the new development strategy, Japan made two concrete proposals in the course of the mid-term review. First, it proposed that South-South cooperation be put into practice in the area of human resource development in Africa. Secondly, it urged that the General Assembly, as the only political institution in existence in which all the nations of the world are represented, engage in intensified dialogue with other international development agencies, by discussing with them the outcome of the review, with a view to strengthening collaboration in this area.

On this first point, specifically, it is the intention of my delegation to begin working with like-minded countries to establishing concrete plans on South-South cooperation in the area of human resource development in Africa. Let me explain specifically what we intend to do between now and the Second Tokyo Conference on International Development, to be held in 1998. The delegation of Japan has a plan to organize in New York a series of seminars for the purpose of exploring concrete ways to facilitate the implementation of South-South cooperation projects, particularly in the field of human resource development and institution-building. These seminars will be open-ended, and all delegations that have something to contribute on this score will be welcome. More detailed information on these seminars should be available before long. For next year, Japan, together with the United Nations, will host the Second Asia-Africa Forum in Thailand, as well as a preparatory meeting for the Second Tokyo Conference. Both of these events will, I hope, be instrumental in giving impetus to the implementation of UN-NADAF.

I wish to close my statement in my dual capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole for the UN-NADAF mid-term review and as Permanent Representative of Japan by stressing once again the importance of the issue of the development of Africa to all the Members of the United Nations, whether they are from Africa or not. With that recognition keenly in mind, my country, Japan, pledges to make the development of Africa its highest United Nations policy priority. Japan intends to be at the forefront of all international efforts to promote our common goals in this extremely important part of the globe.

**The Acting President:** Before calling on the next speaker, I should like to propose, if there is no objection, that the list of speakers in the debate on this item be closed at 5 p.m. this afternoon.

*It was so decided.*

**Mr. Mpay** (Cameroon) (*interpretation from French*): In accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 50/160 of 22 December 1995, our delegations met from 16 to 20 September 1996 within the framework of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. I should like here to extend our congratulations to all the members of the Committee for the outstanding work accomplished.

I should in particular like to pay a well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Hisashi Owada, Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations and Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, for his personal commitment, which is clearly a reflection of the concern of his country, Japan, for Africa. This concern has been reflected not only through the holding of a series of conferences and seminars on the development of Africa, but also through the adoption of numerous initiatives for the continent. By way of example, I would like to mention the holding of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), the establishment of budgetary appropriations for training of young people and the promotion of South-South cooperation.

Before taking up the question of the mid-term review as such, I would first of all like to place the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) in its historic context so that we can better grasp its importance. Having noted that five years after the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development the socio-economic situation of Africa was in fact deteriorating, the international community decided to conceive and adopt a new far-ranging, but realistic instrument for the development of the continent, based on the recognition that the development of Africa is primarily the responsibility of the Africans; that the objective of sustainable economic development can be achieved only through the establishment of a favourable international environment; and that the implementation of any programme for development requires a new type of partnership, one that goes beyond the simple ties that may exist between former colonies and their former colonizers. In short, there was a need to produce a new philosophy for development with shared but differentiated responsibilities and an active and sustained partnership.

This is what we did on 18 December 1991 by adopting the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Under the terms of that Agenda, Africa was to undertake, strengthen or speed up reforms, in particular in the political, economic and social areas. The international community, for its part, was to encourage and sustain these efforts of Africa. Five years after the adoption of UN-NADAF, the balance sheet looks as follows. As was so well pointed out from this very rostrum by His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon and Acting Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, the overwhelming majority of African countries have fulfilled the commitments they made under the New Agenda. They have undertaken far-reaching and difficult reforms designed in particular to speed up the process of democratization, promote human rights and to ensure economic, social and cultural development.

During the past five years, significant breakthroughs have been made in democratic reforms through better management, greater transparency and greater popular participation in the management of public affairs. The Cairo Declaration adopted last year reaffirms the commitment of Africa to pursue these reforms.

As regards the promotion of investment, the majority of African countries have adopted new, very liberal investment regulations. They have gone on to significant customs and fiscal reforms and sped up the process of removing the State from the management of companies. The combined effects of these reforms and of structural adjustment have allowed a number of these countries to limit inflation to approximately 5 per cent.

Concerning popular participation, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in activities for development has been recognized, and in the majority of African countries a framework for concerted action and coordination with these new partners has been set up. At the continental level, an Organization of African Unity (OAU) and non-governmental organization working group has been established to ensure greater participation of the non-governmental organizations in the activities of the OAU. Regarding the mobilization of resources, efforts have been made, in particular for control of public expenditures, to increase domestic savings and relaunch foreign trade.

In the context of cooperation and regional and subregional integration, beyond the purely economic framework, new initiatives are proliferating for the maintenance of peace — for example, the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa, the Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), entrusted with the question of Liberia in West Africa, and similar mechanisms set up in southern Africa for the establishment of peace.

Despite all these efforts, as was so well stated in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee,

"Many of the critical social and economic problems which led to the adoption by the General

> Assembly of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (resolution S-13/2 of 1 June 1986) and of the New Agenda in 1991 still exist. In some countries the problems have even worsened ... In Africa poverty and unemployment are expected to increase substantially. The estimated resource mobilization levels in the New Agenda are still far from being attained and the key development goals have yet to be met." (*A/51/48, annex, para. 4*)

The major merit of the mid-term review of UN-NADAF, the results of which have been submitted today for our consideration, is that it has allowed us to take objective and scrupulous stock of the implementation of UN-NADAF. Above all, it has allowed us to realize that plans and programmes, however ambitious they may be, are nothing without the political will of States to implement them. It is precisely this political will to which I am appealing today on the behalf of all Africa. This is not an appeal to charity, but rather an appeal to remove those obstacles that are negating all of Africa's efforts for development. For, as has also been emphasized by the Acting Chairman of the OAU, how can Africa develop if the financial flows towards the continent decline every day, if official development assistance, which is already declining, is subject to more and more conditions, if the burden of debt continues to increase, if African commodities have difficulty finding access to international markets and if the trend towards reducing investment in our countries is expanding and new capital is still not coming in?

If the international community really wants to support Africa's efforts, as it has committed itself to doing under the terms of UN-NADAF, it must direct its action towards priority areas such as the diversification of commodities and African economies, the improvement of conditions for access to the international market, increases in investments and financial flows and the solution to the problem of external debt.

As Cameroon has already stated, African economies are based primarily on trade in commodities, and any development strategy for the continent must take this reality into account. In this context, the efforts of the African countries to diversify their commodities and economies must be supported by the international community, and favourable conditions should be established for the access of these products to international markets. We welcome the measures taken at the level of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to step up production, promote intra-African trade and facilitate vertical diversification of industrial production through the development of Africa's technological capabilities. We also welcome the opening of a special facility for the diversification of African commodities, the Common Fund for Commodities. Africa is awaiting the annual meeting of the board of the Fund in Marrakesh next December and is expecting not only practical measures for the proper functioning of the facility but also bolder measures.

Regarding the foreign debt, we welcome the positive developments that have taken place recently, in particular the adoption of conditions for debt reduction that are more generous than the Naples terms for the most heavily indebted poor countries. I should like to repeat President Biya's appeal for the urgent implementation of this new initiative and its extension to a greater number of African countries.

At the dawn of the third millennium, Africa remains the continent facing the greatest number of challenges. It is clear that the responsibility for meeting these challenges lies above all with the Africans themselves. However, the duty of solidarity requires that the efforts of the continent be supported by the international community.

In this respect, UN-NADAF offers us an outstanding framework for partnership and cooperation. We can work together within this framework to build an Africa free of the scourges of debt, famine, endemic illness, school underenrolment and other ills. In a word, we can work together to advance an Africa which has joined the train of globalization and universalization. We therefore call upon the international community to fully and urgently implement the conclusions and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly contained in document A/51/48 submitted for our consideration.

**Mr. Abdellah** (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): At the outset, I take pleasure in thanking Ambassador Hisashi Owada of Japan, who presided over last September's proceedings of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). I would also like to thank the Government of Japan for its efforts to help our continent. The most recent demonstration of this was at the High-Level

Seminar on African Development, which was held at Tokyo in August 1996 in the framework of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development.

In respect of item 44 entitled "Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s" I would like to make the following comments: I would like first to thank the international community for its interest in the development and growth of Africa. It is now the turn of UN-NADAF to give effect to United Nations support for the economic emancipation of the continent. The Agenda is a recommitment by United Nations Member States to support African development efforts. For the African States, it constitutes an act of faith and a sign of hope in support of their struggle for development, despite the current international situation and the difficulties they are facing. This support is particularly welcome, as the economic and social crisis that African has been experiencing for the past decade has yet not come to an end in broad areas of the continent.

Together with prolonged drought and acute ecological problems, the situation could only have led to social turmoil which has imperiled the precarious stability of countries, many of which are extremely fragile. It has been in this hostile context that African countries have had to adopt policies to reverse negative trends and put order into their devastated economies. In this connection, stabilization and the structural adjustment programmes sponsored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have been undertaken in almost all of our countries. The reform and structural adjustment programmes to which African countries are committed have all been multidimensional in nature, including measures for domestic economic and commercial liberalization aimed at improving financial management, expanding the tax base and enhancing efficiency and transparency in the fiscal system. Reforms have also been focused on promoting direct foreign investment and on consolidating regional and subregional cooperation. Particular attention in this ambitious project has been given to the human dimension of development and to the balance between the environment and development.

The efforts of the African countries have obtained uneven results, although they have been positive overall. In 1992, 20 African countries experienced negative growth. In 1995, the number of such countries fell to 4. In 1992 once again, three African countries achieved a 6 per cent growth rate in gross national product. In 1995 there were 12.

In this connection, I would like to refer to the Secretary-General's report on implementing UN-NADAF (A/51/228 and Add.1), which indicates that as assessment of the implementation of this new order in 1992-1995 shows that results have been achieved in the areas of human development, the strengthening of institutions and the development of the private sector. However, the report adds that African efforts will not be successful in the time-frame set in UN-NADAF without appropriate support from the international community. This solidarity must be reflected in reliable contributions of sufficient resources on the one hand, and by the establishment of a favourable international context on the other.

Tunisia welcomes the efforts by other countries of the South to enhance their economic cooperation with Africa to that end. That cooperation is particularly noteworthy because it relates to such crucial areas as the transfer of technology and knowledge, providing advisory services, training, joint ventures, trade and investment. The interest that countries of the South have in Africa can also be seen in the development of agriculture and fisheries, education and research, and the alleviation of poverty.

A significant step towards achieving South-South solidarity was seen at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, which was followed by the Asia-Africa Forum: Sharing of Experiences. But such South-South solidarity, which we welcome, does not suffice to help Africa overcome its current crisis. The scope of the problem and the complexity of the obstacles that the continent must overcome in building the foundations of its infrastructure and its social and economic development require greater resolve and more resources, both nationally and internationally, to guarantee that Africa, like other regions, will enjoy sustained and lasting growth and development. We must acknowledge that the activities under way in industrial countries and in the United Nations system, are far from meeting the problems facing Africa. This insufficiency is reflected in official development assistance, investments and indebtedness.

In his report, the Secretary-General notes that

> "Since the early 1990s, less than 2 per cent of total foreign direct investment flows worldwide have come to Africa." *(A/51/228/Add.1, para. 20)*

Marginalizing Africa in direct foreign investment amounts to marginalizing it in world trade. This situation gives rise to deep concern.

The same document indicates that overindebtedness has been one of the major obstacles to Africa's economic recovery and lasting growth. In this connection, it is emphasized that despite the efforts that have been made the main foreign debt indicators show no appreciable improvement. Debt continues to grow and today represents a total of 71.6 per cent of Africa's gross domestic product, as compared to 67.1 per cent in 1991.

The negative flow of debt servicing — which is currently on the order of $28 billion, while UN-NADAF envisaged an annual ceiling of $9 billion — is not offset by the meagre resources received from official development assistance.

Official development assistance has continued to shrink, despite African efforts to use it better. Official development assistance to the continent is currently only $20 billion, far from the $30 billion set by UN-NADAF, with a 4 per cent annual growth rate.

Tunisia would like to express its appreciation for the initiatives taken by some countries — particularly by Japan, Norway and other Nordic countries — which have unreservedly adhered to the additional aid targets for Africa that were called for in UN-NADAF.

In this context, we believe that urgent measures must be taken in this area in order to increase capital flows to the countries of Africa. These measures should lighten the burden of external debt on African countries, thereby enabling them to move from the adjustment phase to the development phase.

The international community must support Africa's efforts to diversify its economy, thereby enabling its peoples not to depend on the export of one or two commodities, the prices of which fluctuate according to the market.

In this connection, I would like to refer to the report of the Secretary-General with regard to estimates of the resources needed to implement UN-NADAF. In its conclusion, the report emphasizes that

> "the rigid international economic environment, the domestic economic hardship and the lukewarm disposition of some creditors to adopt radical measures have constituted obstacles to the mobilization of financial resources and to the development of Africa". *(A/51/228/Add.1, para. 53)*

The document adds that,

> "Nor can Africans and the international community afford to see yet another international initiative for Africa's socio-economic recovery and development fail." *(Ibid., para. 53)*

Endorsing this conclusion, Tunisia, which expresses its appreciation for the Secretary-General's initiative for Africa, sends out an appeal to the international community to ensure that this initiative is successful.

I would like to recall in this connection the terms of draft resolution A/AC.251/L.2 on the mid-term review of the implementation of UN-NADAF, which the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole adopted by consensus last September. It calls upon all Governments, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations — that is to say, the entire international community — to take the necessary measures to ensure effective implementation of UN-NADAF, with a view to the final evaluation undertaken by the United Nations in the year 2002.

The will of the countries of Africa to emancipate themselves and put an end to economic dependency should be received with interest by the international community, with a view to ensuring that the continent can find once again the path of growth within the framework of globalization and the interdependence of the world economy.

**Mr. Amorim** (Brazil): The mid-term review of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) is a major opportunity to address issues that are critical not only to the African people, but to the international community as a whole. The report contains an assessment of actions undertaken and recommendations to fulfil specific development goals and address the challenges faced by African countries in their development process. It is a reaffirmation of the principle of partnership and shared responsibility towards Africa, to which Brazil fully subscribes.

Although agendas, initiatives and debates can create the reassuring impression — particularly in the General Assembly — that the international community is reaching

out in support of Africa, they can also generate a sense of frustration, especially on a continent that faces so many development challenges. The exercise we have undertaken is no exception to this, and we must ensure that it generates concrete actions.

The role of the United Nations is crucial to translating commitments into concrete action in the coming years. It is important that the various agencies of UN-NADAF. I am convinced that in order to make a difference for Africa in areas such as finance, the United Nations must forge a closer relationship at all levels with the Bretton Woods institutions. The United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Africa, set up by the Secretary-General, can play a more important role in this respect.

Some areas of the United Nations Secretariat — such as the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries and the Economic Commission for Africa — can also play a central role in implementing UN-NADAF and should therefore be strengthened.

We welcome the recently launched United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa. At the same time, we stress that this Initiative is complementary and not an alternative to UN-NADAF. The fact that the Initiative has not involved the provision of new resource flows to Africa is, in our view, a source of frustration.

The achievement of the goals set forth in UN-NADAF goes far beyond institutional arrangements in the United Nations system and will depend ultimately on the political will of each of our countries to do its part. For this reason, I wish to focus now on one specific aspect of the implementation of UN-NADAF: the role a country such as mine, Brazil, can play in favour of Africa.

As a developing country which faces situations of extreme poverty and severe economic imbalances, Brazil is not a major donor. However, we are deploying efforts to share with African nations our own experience in struggling for development. In a number of areas of cooperation in capacity-building, this is already a reality. This is the case in fields such as management of agricultural policies, know-how on tropical agriculture, electric power generation and its distribution to poor communities, and monitoring and exploration of mineral resources. Some of these activities are under way in bilateral programmes or are under consideration within multilateral initiatives, such as the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic.

Most African countries still rely on a few primary commodities for much of their export earnings. Our cooperation with African countries to correct the imperfections of commodity markets is well known. Brazil and Africa coordinate with each other in international organizations on commodities, such as the International Coffee Organization, the International Cocoa Organization, the Cocoa Producers' Alliance and the Common Fund for Commodities.

Three years ago, when coffee prices were in a critical situation, we responded to the appeal of President Houphouët-Boigny on behalf of the Inter-African Coffee Organization to create an agreement with an economic clause. As a result, as Foreign Minister at the time, I had the honour to sign in 1993, in Brasilia, the agreement which established the Association of Coffee Producers.

We are working together in organizations such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with a view to ensuring that we are not discriminated against by rules that negatively affect the consumption of our products, such as the criteria for defining rules of origin for coffee in the WTO Committee on Rules of Origin, as well as the question of norms related to cocoa products in the FAO Codex Alimentarius.

More recently, there have been new modalities of cooperation between Brazil and Africa. One example is the Community of Portuguese-speaking countries, which was formally created earlier this year and of course includes the participation of Portugal and five Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa.

The dialogue between subregional integration processes is yet another example of cooperation. We attach great importance to furthering a dialogue between the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the integration processes in Africa. With the Southern African Development Community, we have already taken initial steps in this direction. I would like to point out that one of the objectives of MERCOSUR has been to enhance external trade with other partners, including those of the developing world.

As far as conflict resolution is concerned, 30 years ago Brazil rejoiced at the creation of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU), which symbolized the end of colonialism. Today, we welcome new approaches to conflict prevention, management and resolution that will

more deeply involve the Organization of African Unity. For our part, we are engaged as troop contributors in the peacekeeping process in Angola, as well as in the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III), with the participation of more than 1,000 men. Recently, we actively supported the peaceful transition in Mozambique, both in the United Nations Security Council and in the field.

One could ask whether Brazil could do more. The answer is certainly "yes", and we are committed to doing so. Presently, we are negotiating cooperation programmes with some African countries, focusing on social rehabilitation policies for populations affected by war and for children needing special protection measures, as well as on control of endemic diseases and HIV/AIDS.

I wish to conclude by assuring the Assembly that Brazil is fully committed to the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

**Mr. Wang Xuexian** (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly has just concluded the mid-term review of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). The conclusion shows that the main goals of UN-NADAF are far from having been attained, despite the untiring efforts of the African countries over the past five years. The African continent remains plagued by widespread poverty, heavy debt, worsening terms of trade and serious shortfalls in financial resources for development. Many African countries are being marginalized in an international environment of accelerating integration.

In order to put an end to this situation, priority areas and concrete suggestions for future action were proposed in the mid-term review. Meanwhile, African countries in the international community reaffirmed their respective commitments to the New Agenda and to the principle of partnership and shared responsibility in this regard. While gratified by the consensus reached in the mid-term review, we must ask ourselves how we can avoid having to reiterate the same commitments a few years hence and how can we truly translate them into actions that will contribute to Africa's recovery and healthy development.

During the mid-term review, African countries strongly urged the international community to fulfil in earnest its commitments under UN-NADAF. I clearly remember the strong appeal made by the Ambassador of Cameroon in his statement on behalf of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) members, which called for the international community to talk less to Africa and do more to support African efforts. This just demand of the OAU highlighted the New Agenda and its lack of direction for future international cooperation.

We have no doubt that Africans will continue to undertake the primary responsibility for the economic and social development of their continent. However, the consequences of the ruthless exploitation they suffered in the past and the poverty and underdevelopment caused by today's grim international economic environment are seriously hampering their efforts to achieve economic and social development. In these circumstances, African countries need the active support and cooperation of the international community in order to become free of the vicious cycle of underdevelopment. We are of the view that international support based on partnership and shared responsibility should be reflected in a series of measures.

First, more solid work should be done to help resolve the pressing problems confronting African countries. In this connection, efforts should be made to create a favourable external environment, in line with the priority areas identified in the mid-term review, to alleviate debt burden and increase capital flows into Africa, to promote Africa's economic diversification and improve its economic structure, and to establish fair terms of trade and increase market access for African commodities to the developed countries. It should be particularly emphasized that official development assistance remains the main source of external funds for many African countries. The countries concerned should fulfil their commitment by increasing official development assistance for African countries to meet their dire needs.

Secondly, concrete action should be taken to support efforts for development cooperation between African countries, including the regional integration process in Africa and subregional economic cooperation. In recent years, African countries have been exploring new ways to enhance cooperation, so as to accelerate the achievement of common development by learning from and complementing each other. The establishment of the African Economic Community and the development of many other regional and subregional economic cooperative organizations have brought about a strong momentum for cooperation. However, such regional cooperation efforts often suffer a lack of sufficient resources. The international community has no reason to stand by with folded arms. Rather, it should cooperate with African countries in their endeavours in this area.

Thirdly, the particular choice of a road for development on the part of the various African countries should be respected. Countries vary in their national conditions, needs and priorities. Imposing a specific model on Africa, in disregard of its actual situation, can only aggravate its difficulties. Sincere assistance should have no political strings attached.

Fourthly, the United Nations should continue to play a primary mobilizing and monitoring role in the effective implementation of the follow-up to the New Agenda. The United Nations has already launched the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa. The United Nations and the relevant bodies within the system should contribute to Africa's development by putting in sufficient resources and formulating and implementing assistance programmes in the light of the specific features of African countries and their priorities for national economic development.

An important component of China's foreign policy is to strengthen unity and cooperation with developing countries, including those in Africa. China has provided some assistance, within the means available to it, to African countries in support of their economic and social development. In recent years, we have been discussing with African countries ways to expand cooperation in various forms and through various channels, with a view to further expanding the scope of the cooperation and improving its efficiency. China will continue steadfastly to support African countries in their efforts for economic development in the context of bilateral and South-South cooperation. While continuing to provide government assistance to them with no political conditions, China will encourage enterprises on both sides to cooperate with each other and expand the channels, for the further growth of trade between China and Africa. In this way, China wishes to contribute its share to the attainment of the goals of the New Agenda.

His Excellency Mr. Jiang Zemin, President of China, predicted during his visit to Africa last May that

> "a united, stable and prosperous new Africa will mean not only economic liberation for the politically emancipated African people, but also a tremendous contribution by Africa to peace and development in the world and to the civilization and progress of mankind".

We are convinced that this will become a reality.

**Ms. Lee** (Singapore): The adoption of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) by the General Assembly in December 1991 raised major expectations of better prospects for Africa.

In his mid-term report on UN-NADAF, the Secretary-General has confirmed that most African countries have taken action to promote growth and development. Many African countries have embarked on a range of political and economic reforms, which have shown signs of "tangible progress".

In particular, there has been a significant improvement in overall economic performance, with the number of African countries achieving UN-NADAF's annual target growth rate of 6 per cent in gross domestic product (GDP) increasing from three countries in 1992 to 12 countries in 1995. The number of African countries with negative growth also has dropped, from 19 countries in 1993 to three countries in 1995.

However, despite the various efforts of the African countries themselves and the assistance of the international community, those results have fallen short of what was envisaged by the New Agenda. In the first half of the 1990s, Africa's GDP accounted for only 2.04 per cent, on average, of the world output.

African countries have acknowledged that

> "Africa's future is in their hands." *(A/51/228, para. 55)*

But the international community must also take concrete steps to help African countries adjust to the new global market environment. Greater investment inflows, diversification of export products and expanded access to external markets are urgently required. There is a need to improve the quality of international support for Africa's efforts. Most of the region's potential remains unrealized.

We have seen that within the South-South cooperation framework, the experiences of advanced developing countries are relevant to African development. This suggests that South-South cooperation is a viable strategy for African development. The many areas covered under this cooperation include the transfer of technology and expertise, the provision of advisory services, training, joint ventures, trade and investment, agricultural and fishery development, and education and research.

Singapore is fully committed to South-South cooperation. Within the limitations of our small size, limited resources, manpower constraints and inexperience, Singapore has adopted a stage-by-stage approach for the provision of technical assistance to other developing countries.

In 1992, Singapore formalized and expanded its technical assistance programmes through the establishment of the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore currently coordinates SCP training courses and study visits for about 2,000 officials each year. Those officials come from more than 60 countries, including many African countries. Over 150 courses are conducted annually by some 40 Singapore public sector agencies. These courses cover a broad spectrum: civil aviation, health and medicine, customs documentation, economic development policies, information technology and the English language.

Singapore also has third country training programmes with seven countries: Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, Republic of Korea, Norway and the United Kingdom, and three international organizations: the Asian Development Bank, the Commonwealth Secretariat and the World Bank. Singapore also cooperates with the United Nations Development Programme and the Colombo Plan in running various training programmes.

At this time, because of our limited resources and manpower constraints, Singapore has been able to focus on only four African countries. However, we will expand this to include nine more in the near future. While we would like to do more, we are not able, with our small size and other limitations, to reach all 53 African countries.

Singapore therefore is exploring new ways and means of extending the reach of our technical assistance to as many African countries as we can. One example of this is the Botswana National Productivity Centre, which was opened by President Masire in August 1995. Singapore has also begun to conduct training for 75 Botswanan work improvement team facilitators, who are being trained in Singapore in three batches over three years.

By training these Botswana officials, Singapore hopes that the Centre will not only serve Botswana, but will become the premier training ground for productivity-related courses for the whole of southern Africa. Singapore has also given assistance to Ghana by providing training on how to adapt Singapore's social security system to Ghana's needs. We again hope that this experience can be of relevance to Ghana's neighbours.

I would like to add that at a recent dinner in Singapore, hosted by our Prime Minister, Mr. Goh Chok Tong, in honour of the visiting Namibian President, Mr. Samuel Nujoma, Prime Minister Goh announced that Singapore will send a high-level study team to Namibia to discuss Namibia's specific training needs and to examine the possibility of formulating longer-term training programmes. Singapore's focus on training stems from its emphasis on human resources development, as this is an important factor in developing an economy. We hope to extend similar programmes to other African countries soon.

The private sector in Singapore has also begun assistance programmes for the African countries. On 22 October 1996, an African scholarship scheme was formally announced in Nairobi, Kenya. Under the scheme the Singapore International Foundation, a Singapore non-governmental organization, and the Standard Chartered Bank will offer scholarships at undergraduate and postgraduate levels and also short-term management courses to African nationals to study in Singapore. A total of 28 awards will be made available for the first three years.

Singapore has only been able to assist a small fraction of the African countries because we are a small country and have limited resources, especially in relation to manpower. We hope to do more in the future. Singapore believes in South-South cooperation and will continue to do all it can to help its friends in Africa realize their full and undoubted potential.

**Mr. Willis** (Australia): As we move into the second half century of the United Nations and towards the new millennium, it is sobering indeed to recognize that although so much has been achieved to advance the human condition in many parts of the world, a substantial section of the world, by and large, has not been party to that progress. Nor will it be in the future unless there is substantive change.

Over the last 15 years, economic growth has failed in almost 100 countries around the world, representing 1.6 billion people — almost one third of the world's population. Seventy of these countries now have average real incomes below those in 1980, and 43 are below 1970 levels. Many of these countries are in Africa, and for much of the past 15 years especially they have been

experiencing negative economic growth. Thus, between 1980 and 1994 Africa's real gross domestic product per capita fell by 15 per cent.

More recently, however, the situation has improved, with the average rate of economic growth increasing considerably in the last couple of years. Africa is now in the third consecutive year of real per capita growth and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is forecasting growth in Africa of 5 per cent this year and next — the highest growth rate in two decades.

Furthermore, in 1995 12 African countries achieved or surpassed a rate of growth of 6 per cent — the target rate of growth for Africa as a whole established in the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa at the start of this decade. Moreover, the number of African countries with negative growth declined from 20 in 1992 to only 4 in 1995.

But, encouraging as these recent developments are, Africa's economic problems are far from being solved. There are still many countries in desperate economic circumstances, with high levels of external debt, minimal foreign investment, low levels of savings, poor terms of trade, adverse balances of payments and minimal participation in the global economy. As a consequence, they suffer from low growth, low and even falling per capita incomes, high unemployment and grinding poverty.

Despite these economic difficulties, some social progress has clearly been achieved by Africa in such areas as health and education. Thus, there have been important improvements in life expectancy, infant mortality rates and provision of safe drinking water, coupled with improved levels of nutrition, increased literacy rates and higher school enrolment.

Although some of these improvements are quite substantial, the absolute levels of achievement are well below most other parts of the world. There are, furthermore, some serious adverse developments in the social sphere. In particular, endemic diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS pose especially serious problems.

Africa's problems are clearly of such dimensions that they require special and extraordinary efforts if they are to be overcome, and if Africa is not to be largely excluded from the process of human development. This was recognized by the international community and led, among other steps, to the adoption by this body in 1991 of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

Such efforts are required not only by the international community, but by Africa itself. In so saying, we acknowledge that many African countries have taken very considerable steps to improve their level of social and economic development, including undertaking structural economic reform to correct economic imbalances, increasing the priority given to social expenditures, providing social safety nets, improving the rights of women and children, protecting the environment, enhancing agricultural production and marketing processes, increasing food security and embracing democratic processes, as well as the introduction of good governance.

Observers seeking evidence that economic reform is consistent with a decline in overall poverty need look no further than the example of Mozambique. While the debate over structural adjustment and poverty in broader Africa continues to attract a great deal of attention, signs of a growth dividend are emerging in Mozambique, which is one of the poorest and most indebted countries in the world.

Nevertheless, for Africa as a whole to make the kind of social and economic progress that it so desperately requires, an even greater reform effort will be required, along with enhanced support from the international community. It is in this context that Australia strongly welcomes the Secretary-General's Special Initiative on Africa. This initiative, which aims to reinforce the New Agenda for Africa by practical proposals to support African development, will require substantial resources, both internal and external, if it is to be implemented. This will in turn require considerable resolve by donor countries, multilateral institutions and African countries themselves to find the $2.5 billion per annum for the next decade that the Special Initiative will require.

Importantly, a key aspect of the Special Initiative — the need for debt relief for highly indebted countries — has been acted upon by the Bretton Woods institutions. The recent annual meeting of the IMF and World Bank agreed to adopt a new debt relief initiative for highly indebted poor countries, many of which are in Africa. This is welcome and practical progress.

Previous debt-relief initiatives have not succeeded in reducing African indebtedness. Indeed, debt has continued to rise; in 1995, it represented 65 per cent of Africa's

gross domestic product and 250 per cent of Africa's exports. The debt-servicing burden, at $28 billion, or 38 per cent of Africa's export earnings, was three times higher than the target set in the United Nations New Agenda for Africa.

Debt burdens of such proportions place great limitations on growth potential. Nor can they be offset by private capital flows, because the very existence of such debts scares off foreign capital and may even create domestic capital flight. Africa has therefore fared poorly in attracting foreign private capital, especially foreign direct investment, which brings technology as well as capital. Of the $84 billion of foreign direct investment that went to developing countries in 1994, sub-Saharan Africa received only 3.6 per cent, and the least developed countries only 1 per cent.

The IMF-World Bank initiative, which could involve the sale of some of IMF's gold reserves to finance this measure, should help considerably over the next several years to alleviate the debt burden of the poorest countries, thereby relieving a major inhibition on growth. However, this assistance will properly be dependent on policy performance by the countries involved in regard both to macroeconomic and structural policies and to social policy reforms to reduce poverty and improve basic health care and education.

The inclusion of Africa in the global trading network is also a key factor in generating substantial and sustainable economic growth. Africa's increasing marginalization from the world economy, as shown by the decline in its share of world trade from 5 per cent in 1980 to only 2.1 per cent in 1995, must be reversed if it is to embark on a course of strong and sustained economic growth.

That will require major economic transformation to diversify production and exports. Diversification of its economy would involve widening its commodity base, expanding its production of mineral products, and especially increasing its production of manufactured goods. Africa's share of world manufacturing value-added has remained stagnant at just 1 per cent over the past two decades. The success of the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa is therefore essential if the continent is to be able to take full advantage of the opportunities that will be created by the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round.

Australia is convinced that global trade and development will be strengthened by further liberalization of trade. An open world trading environment can make a positive and lasting contribution to economic growth and improved living standards. But extra measures, both national and international, are required. Australia therefore strongly supports the declaration of the ninth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD IX) and has, through its own initiative, taken measures to help developing countries to benefit more completely from the opportunities presented by the post-Uruguay Round trading environment.

The United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) and the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa will be central to achieving these policy and economic benchmarks. We support these measures and welcome the report of the Ad Hoc Committee undertaking the mid-term review.

Australia recognizes that the challenges faced by Africa are considerable and that multilateral partnerships are one important way of overcoming them. Australia also recognizes that Africa itself is taking definitive action, nationally and regionally, to put in place appropriate macroeconomic policies, to establish necessary infrastructure and to develop a skilled workforce. These African initiatives and reform measures were the subject of recent discussion at the Organization of African Unity summit meeting in Yaoundé. Australia supports this process and we will work with our African partners to assist in the implementation of agreed priorities. Like others, we also support the broad thrust of the recommendations in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. We look to joint resolve to deliver against the agreed goals.

Australia's aid flows to Africa are expected to total over $A 105 million in the financial year 1996-1997. Our recognition of Africa's enormous development needs is evidenced by the fact that, although our aid is modest compared with the challenges faced, we are expanding the percentage of our bilateral aid allocated to Africa.

For the first time, Australia will be negotiating full country programmes with Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa. These programmes will emphasize capacity-building, private sector development and poverty alleviation. Support will also be available for regional activities in southern Africa for areas such as health and desertification. In the area of health, Australia is particularly aware of the urgent need to fight HIV/AIDS in Africa. To this end, we have pledged $A 10 million for HIV/AIDS care and prevention projects in Africa. Almost

$A 2 million of these funds have now been committed for projects in Zambia in support of innovative ways of reducing HIV transmission and strengthening community-based care for AIDS sufferers.

Australian assistance will continue to be available to other countries in the Horn and eastern and southern Africa. The focus will be on training assistance, assistance through non-governmental organizations, emergency and relief programmes, and reconstruction and reform activities.

In conclusion, Australia welcomes the United Nations initiatives for Africa and the principles of partnership on which they are based. We look forward to joining a consensus resolution supporting the outcome of the mid-term review of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

**Mr. Aass** (Norway): We are here today to adopt the conclusions and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Mid-term Review of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Norway strongly believes that the time has come to commit ourselves to ensuring that concrete steps are taken towards radically improving the livelihood of the many African women, men and children who live in absolute poverty. In other words, we should be content with no less than a common understanding and commitment from all involved parties — the countries in sub-Saharan Africa and bilateral donors, as well as the various United Nations agencies — to tackle the problems of Africa by operationalizing the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), through the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa.

The mid-term review process has highlighted some central causes for the lack of implementation of UN-NADAF. Although at this stage we should not dwell too much on the past, it is important to take due note of these causes if we want the United Nations system to play a role as a major actor and initiator. The Norwegian Government is convinced that the United Nations system and the Secretary-General have an important role to play and a responsibility to take initiatives — such as the one taken for Africa — when the situation calls for it.

Experience has shown, however, that before initiatives are launched, extensive consultations are necessary — even crucial — to secure follow-up. UN-NADAF has been hampered by the fact that it has not been sufficiently anchored in the Governments in Africa, and that consequently it has not been adequately integrated into their development plans. In addition, the responsibility for implementation has been divided among different United Nations bodies. The countries in question often do not possess the necessary administrative capacity to deal with too many donors and agencies. It is therefore necessary to ensure that initiatives are well coordinated and broad-based, and that organizations of the United Nations system act in a unified manner at the country level. Last but not least, it is imperative that donors be consulted in time so as to secure financing and ensure sufficient funding.

The mid-term review has provided us with an opportunity to take stock of the situation in Africa. We note with satisfaction that the Organization of African Unity's assessment of the implementation of UN-NADAF coincides with the review. This fact, together with the consensus on the linkages and complementarity between UN-NADAF and the Special Initiative, which means that the latter is the operationalization of the former, will bring the process onto a new and sounder track. We now have legitimate hope that Africa's poor will play their rightful part in the development process, and that this constitutes an important step forward on the path to poverty eradication.

Norway supports the mid-term review's stress on implementation. The review provides us with an assessment of the present situation, describes the framework conditions and provides the African Governments and the international community with recommendations regarding implementation.

The Governments of Africa have come a long way towards creating a framework within which concrete actions can be implemented on a sustainable basis. In order for African leaders to be able to encourage and sustain this framework and even develop it further, we, the international community, must undertake firm commitments.

In my Government's view it is vital that adequate financial resources be allocated to the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa. The mid-term review has shown that there are insufficient resources available to secure its implementation. We are concerned by the facts presented in the review, which show that Africa's debt burden has increased and that the level of official development assistance has dropped in this decade to an average 0.3

per cent of donor gross national product (GNP). Norway has for many years allocated around 1 per cent of its GNP to development assistance. It is our hope that by adopting the mid-term review the countries in the developed world will assume their responsibility for contributions to the financing of the Special Initiative. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Mr. Ricupero, stated in his intervention at the ninth session of the Conference, "We are all indebted to Africa". In Mr. Ricupero's thinking, assistance to Africa is a matter of justice; resources have been taken away from the continent over the centuries, and it is now time for the developed world to reverse the flow of resources.

In my Government's view, the review suffers from the fact that there is no outline for the practical implementation of the Special Initiative. Paragraph 2 of the draft resolution adopted at the review might take us a long way towards fulfilling the Special Initiative — or it might not take us anywhere. The real challenge ahead is starting the implementation at the country level. However, before this can be done, modalities for coordination and cooperation as regards action on the Initiative must be clearly defined to ensure that we do not lose more time. We encourage the steering committee of the Special Initiative to give top priority to operationalizing the Initiative in a dynamic manner. Most of the activities planned under the Special Initiative are in the social sector. We are confident that with the broad aid experience gained in the past, activities will be planned and implemented in a manner that will not lead to further aid dependency in recipient countries.

Allow me to conclude by restating Norway's commitment and readiness to participate in a coordinated effort for the development of Africa. This includes a preparedness to participate in a dialogue on the implementation of the Initiative both at Headquarters as well as at the country level. Our commitment also implies a willingness by Norway to come up with additional budgetary funds, for example in the social sectors, as a follow-up on the 20/20 initiative. It is my Government's firm hope that this mid-term review will be a fresh point of departure for the Special Initiative. Innocent African children deserve hope for the future, a hope that stretches beyond day-to-day survival.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*